

The Town of Laurel  
Mayor & Council Meeting Minutes  
November 17, 2025

A Mayor & Council Meeting was held at Laurel Town Hall in the Mayor & Council Chambers on Monday, November 17, 2025, beginning at 7:00 p.m. The following persons were in attendance Mayor Carlos Oliveras, President of Council Chris Calio, Jim LaRue, RogJenea Fisher via ZOOM, George Lodato, Jonathan Kellam, and Donald Holden via ZOOM. Also, in attendance were Public Works Director James Foskey, Captain Tyler Bryan, Judge Ruffin, Finance Manager Melissa Cassimore, Recording Secretary Alexis Oliphant, and Town Manager Jamie Smith. It was noted that Director of Code Enforcement Position is vacant and Chief Robert Kracyla is absent.

Captain Bryan presented the Police Promotion Ceremony to PFC Paul Amalfitano.

Mayor Oliveras presented tributes and a proclamation to Pastor Rob Brown from Vital Church for his positive impact and contributions to the community. Mayor Oliveras proclaimed November 17<sup>th</sup> Pastor Rob Day. Pastor Rob stated we live in a town of opportunity and urged everyone to keep the opportunity alive by love and action.

Mayor Oliveras stated Mrs. Gail Bruce and Mrs. Stacey Lane from the Laurel Public Library are in attendance to present a Story Walk Request. Mrs. Lane stated the library received a mini grant from the American Lung Association and is requesting to install a story walk of 16 platforms at Tidewater Park. She advised she is working with the Laurel School District with students ranging from 2<sup>nd</sup> grade to 7<sup>th</sup> grade in creating posters to prevent smoking and vaping. She stated the library will be responsible for the installation and the interchanging of the platforms. Town Manager Smith recommended the platforms to be installed with no interference with the existing platforms located at the park. Town Manager Smith inquired how often will the stories be changed. Mrs. Lane stated the library will be overseeing the maintenance of the story walk by changing the stories every six months. Public Works Director Foskey recommended using inground mounts. Mrs. Lane stated yes, that is what they're proposing. Public Works Director Foskey recommended the library to work with the town prior to installing the story walk due to services being located at the park. Town Manager Smith inquired if they would be utilizing any stories that relate to the Nanticoke Indian theme represented at Tidewater Park. Mrs. Lane stated yes, they have stories available as soon as the anti-smoking posters are replaced.

President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the Laurel Public Library Request for a Story Walk as presented located at Tidewater Park. Councilman Lodato seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

The Mayor & Council Regular and Closed Session Minutes of October 20, 2025, were presented for review. Councilman Lodato made a motion to accept the regular and closed session minutes of October 20, 2025. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

The October 2025 Department Head Reports were presented for review.

- Public Works Foskey stated a pre-bid meeting was held this past week pertaining Transite Phase 4. He stated George & Lynch have been on site at 6<sup>th</sup> Street for sewer issues. He advised the town continues to look for multiple funding sources to relieve the cost of repairs.

Councilman Kellam inquired a timeline of Transite 4. Public Works Director Foskey stated once the project is award approximately 3 to 4 months.

Councilman Lodato inquired if the repairs/replacement to our infrastructure are in the budget. Public Works Director Foskey advised there is some funds in the budget, however, based on the costs we are seeing, additional funds need to be placed in the budget. We have been lucky with getting funding for water infrastructure improvements, however, we need to start looking at funding sources for our sewer mains, as they are starting to require some costly repairs.

- Judge Ruffin stated she had no additions to her report.
- Finance Manager Cassimore stated we are approximately 33% into the budget year. Not all revenues sources are on pace at this time. She stated Dunbar rent will be increasing due to the new lease and the town will be saving \$400.00 a month on the town's cell phone account. She stated on December 1, 2025, penalties will be imposed on outstanding taxes.
- Captain Bryant stated an offer of employment has been made and accepted by Gavin Manning who will begin his academy training at the Dover Municipal Training Academy on January 11, 2026. He stated Sgt. Haddock graduated from the 3-week Leadership Development Program (LDP) hosted by the Delaware State Police as he is the first Laurel Police Officer to be accepted and graduated. He advised K9 Grimm is soon ready for retirement and PFC Adams will begin his K-9 training in April 2026 with S/Cpl. Howard following in April 2027. He stated PFC Adams, Sukar, and Tindley were honored at the Mothers Against Drunk Driving Awards Banquet.
- Town Manager Smith stated a P&Z Meeting will be held on December 10, 2025 pertaining to a Final Site Plan Submission for Kearsarge Solar Farms and a Preliminary Site Plan for Truitt Farm Retail. She stated a Pre-Construction Tap Meeting will be held to determine a better timeline for the proposed walkway from the Mill Dam to Poplar Street.

Councilman Lodato inquired if a person has been contacted pertaining the weed overgrowth at the Mill Dam. Town Manager Smith stated there is a new person in charge and that she will be reaching out to get their contact information.

Mayor Oliveras presented the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Ordinance 2025-3 pertaining Chapter 55 Brush, Grass, & Weeds. Town Manager Smith stated this a follow-up to the request made by Mr. Phillips at last months meeting to include: the approval by Mayor and Council for the planting of a pollinator, meadows, cultivated flowers, and similar plants are exception to this rule. When the plantings of pollinator meadows, cultivated flowers or other similar plants die back at the end of the season, they must be cut to a minimum of six inches. President of Council Calio made a motion to accept the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Final Reading of Ordinance 2025-3. Councilman Lodato seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Mayor Oliveras presented Resolution 2025-9 pertaining to the Delaware State Housing Authority. Town Manager Smith stated Resolution 2025-9 allows the Delaware State Housing Authority to create a pilot program to provide technical assistance to local governments to implement zoning and land-use reforms. President of Council Calio made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-9. Councilwoman Fisher seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Town Manager Smith stated the Christmas Parade will be held on Friday, December 5, 2025. The line-up will begin at 6:00 p.m. on Evergreen Drive and the Laurel Elementary School – Bus Parking Lot. The parade will begin at 7:00 p.m. and travel from Central Avenue to Maryland Avenue. This year's theme is a "Whoville Christmas."

Councilman LaRue thanked the town staff for their hard work and thanked all the residents who were in attendance.

Councilwoman Fisher thanked all the residents who were in attendance and congratulated Pastor Rob on his recognition.

Councilwoman Fisher provided an update on the Laurel Youth Council advising that the surveys have been disbursed at the Laurel High School with permission from Dr. Larrimore.

Councilman Lodato thanked all the residents who were in attendance and congratulated Pastor Rob on his recognition.

Councilman Kellam thanked the town staff for their hard work, congratulated Pastor Rob on his recognition, and stated the Laurel Library is the best library in Delaware.

Mayor Oliveras shared a message that portrayed the importance of what people call home and urged everyone to focus on the positive instead of the negativity with the inaugural Heritage Day occurring this spring.

Mrs. Cheryl Barber inquired why residents were receiving letters pertaining lead testing. Public

Works Director Foskey stated approximately 4 years ago the EPA mandated all municipalities to comply with a Lead Copper and Back Flow Prevention Policy. He stated 120 Water drafted the letters and were sent to properties with an unknown water service that may or may not contain a poly, a galvanized, or a lead connection. The services are for those located within the property. He advised a lead test kit can be purchased by the property owner if they wish to proceed.

A resident stated November is Youth Homeless Month.

Councilman Lodato shared a message with everyone as Thanksgiving is approaching.

Councilman Lodato made a motion to hold a closed session to discuss personnel and contractual matters. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Regular Session Recessed at 7:51 p.m.

Regular Session Reconvened at 8:11 p.m.

President of Council Calio made a motion to accept Resolution 2025-10, pertaining property located at 31039 Poplar Street, Laurel, Delaware, Tax Map #232-12.18.60.01 as the Mayor & Council were in compliance with the Surplus Property Policy of the Town of Laurel. Councilman Kellam seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Councilman Lodato made a motion to accept the proposed amendment to the job description pertaining the Director of Code Enforcement to include that a candidate must be certified in The International Commercial/Residential Plan Review and Building Inspections Codes within the 6 months of employment. Councilman LaRue seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

With there being no further business, Councilman Kellam made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Lodato seconded the motion. Vote was 7-0.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

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Mayor

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President of Council

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Town Manager

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Recording Secretary